

Claims

1. Device for supplying single articles provided with a head and stick, such as lollipops, to be packed in bags, comprising a supply station for the articles in a disorderly flow, a discharge station for discharge of the articles in an orderly flow for further processing or treatment in the packaging process, a distribution disc connecting to the supply station and the discharge station and having a series of holes at its circumference for accommodation of the heads of the articles, means for urging the heads of the articles in the holes, means for keeping down the sticks of the articles the heads of which have been accommodated in the holes, during the movement of the distribution disc from the supply station to the discharge station, the holes being vertically continuous and the means for keeping down being absent at the location of the discharge station, the discharge station being placed vertically underneath the distribution disc.
2. Device according to claim 1, the discharge station being placed above the supply tube of a vertical form-fill-seal machine.
3. Device according to claim 2, the supply station connecting to or vertically -at least partially- coinciding with the discharge station in circumferential direction of the distribution disc.
4. Device according to claim 2 or 3, the supply device, particularly the discharge station, being placed on the form-fill-seal machine in a manner so as to be adjustable in height.
5. Device according to any one of the claims 1-4, the disc at the outer edge being provided with radial slits for accommodation of the sticks,

which slits connect to the holes.

5 6. Device according to any one of the claims 1-5, the means for keeping down being positioned for keeping down the sticks radially outwards with respect to the distribution disc, the means for keeping down preferably comprising a fixed rod positioned at the circumference of the distribution disc.

10 7. Device according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising means for bringing the sticks into a substantially horizontal position on the distribution disc.

15 8. Vertical form-fill-seal machine having an upright fill or supply tube over which a foil tubing is guided downwards, having transverse sealing means placed immediately beneath the fill tube, the machine further comprising at least one supply device for singled articles such as lollipops, placed above the fill tube.

20 9. Vertical form-fill-seal machine according to claim 8, a supply device according to any one of the preceding claims being placed above the fill tube.

25 10. Vertical form-fill-seal machine according to claim 8 or 9, provided with means active along the fill tube for downward driving the foil tubing and furthermore provided with a sensor for noticing the passage of an article dispensed by the discharge station, which sensor is functionally connected to a central control unit of the machine, which controls the means for the downward driving of the foil tubing and the transverse sealing jaws, also depending on the signal of the sensor.

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11. Method for packing single articles provided with a head and a stick, such as lollipops, by means of a form-fill-seal machine, the articles being

supplied in an orderly flow by means of the supply device according to any one of the claims 1-7 via its discharge station, to the form-fill-seal machine.

- 5 12. Device provided with one or more of the characterizing measures described in the attached description and/or shown in the attached drawings.